**Title:** Need for construction of a bridge on river Brahmani on the Nilkanthpur Bhuban road in Orissa connecting N.H.42 and 200-A.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (DHENKANAL): Sir, there has been an inordinate delay in the construction of the high level bridge over river Brahmani on the Nilkanthpur Bhuban Road connecting Mandar-Gondia, Deogaon, Kapilas and Dhenkanal in Orissa connecting N.H.42 with N.H.200A. and N.H.S. between Calcutta and Madras. The project was accorded administrative approval in 1994. It is named after a great freedom fighter, 19-year-old boatman Baji Rout who died in police firing at Village Nilakanthpur in 1938 and who is immortalised by the famous Oriya poet, Gnanpeeth Award winner Sachi Raut Ray. The people, particularly the small and marginal farmers find great difficulties in marketing their produce due to lack of means of transport in the absence of a bridge. Steel plants are coming up in the area with the hope that the bridge would be constructed soon. Besides connecting the district headquarters Dhenkanal, it will provide a direct communication for the devotees to pay a visit to the famous holy shrine of Kapilash, the abode of Lord Chandrashekhar. Therefore, the bridge will be the harbinger of progress, social empowerment and social mobility for a large segment of population living in an under-developed and backward area although having abundant natural resources. It will be a befitting memorial for freedom fighter Baji Rout, if the bridge, named after him, is constructed in a year when the nation is celebrating the ushering of the new millennium. I request the Union Government to construct the Baji Rout Setu over river Brahmani in my constituency Dhenkanal without any further delay as the cost is escalating at double digits and delay would mean denial of infrastructural facilities even after 53 years of Independence.